

Why did it take all this time for the children of Israel to be taken out of Egypt? God could have done it at any time. As the text tells us earlier, the people became a great people while living in Goshen. Although they kept together as a community, they did become complacent. The worship rituals that had been passed down by Abraham to Isaac to Jacob to Joseph were lost to a point that the people forgot about God.

Finally when the Pharaoh died and his son took power the oppression was made even grater. It is not until the affliction, burden and oppression grew so terrible that the people remembered the God of their fathers and finally cried out to God and asked for deliverance

What does it mean that God remembered his covenant? Does God need to remember? Clearly not, remembering here is when God is finally ready to fulfill the covenant with Abraham, when it was revealed to Abraham that the people would be slaves for 400 years. It may not be exactly 400 years, but it is now time to redeem the people and take them from Egypt. It has taken this long for the people to be ready for this.

As was explained earlier, it was due to the women of Israel that the population increased. In fact the sages said that by virute of the righteous women of that generation they were redeemed from Egypt. Pharaoh tried first to seperate the men from the women to stop reproduction. But that did not work because the women would secretly bring their husbands to the apple orchards, hide among the trees and lie with them. When this did not work, Pharaoh decreed that the male babies should be killed and the midwives were to report male births. But the midwives would report back that by the time they got to the homes, the babies were already born and hidden. Finally, Pharaoh decreed that all male babies were to be drowned in the river. It was at this point that Yocheved hid Moshe in the basket. Tradition tells us that the two midwives, Shifra and Puah were actually Yocheved and Miriam. For their bravery, God made them the founders of two dynasties. Yocheved, the mother of Aaron would become the mother of the priesthood, and Miriam was a direct ancestor of King David so she became the mother of the royal house and of the future Messiah. With this level of severity, God was ready to act.

“We cried out to the Lord, the God of our fathers. And God heard our voice and saw our affliction, our burden and our oppression.” **“We cried out to the Lord, God of our fathers”** as it is said, “In those many days, the king of Egypt died and the children of Israel sighed because of their labor, and they cried. And because of their labor their cry reached God.”

וּנְצַעַק אֶל יְיָ אֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ,
וַיִּשְׁמַע יְיָ אֶת קִלְנוֹ, וַיִּרְא אֶת
עַנְיֵנוּ, וְאֶת עֲמַלְנוֹ, וְאֶת
לְחַצְנוֹ: וּנְצַעַק אֶל יְיָ אֱלֹהֵי
אֲבוֹתֵינוּ, כְּמָה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: וַיְהִי
בְיָמֵים הָרַבִּים הָהֵם, וַיָּמָת מֶלֶךְ
מִצְרַיִם, וַיִּאֲנְחוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מִן
הָעֲבֹדָה וַיִּזְעָקוּ. וַתַּעַל שׁוֹעַתָם
אֶל הָאֱלֹהִים מִן הָעֲבֹדָה:

Exodus 2:23

“And God heard our voice” as it is said, “and God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac and with Jacob.

וַיִּשְׁמַע יְיָ אֶת קִלְנוֹ. כְּמָה
שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: וַיִּשְׁמַע אֱלֹהִים אֶת
נַאֲקָתָם, וַיִּזְכֹּר אֱלֹהִים אֶת
בְּרִיתוֹ, אֶת אַבְרָהָם, אֶת יִצְחָק,
וְאֶת יַעֲקֹב:

Exodus 2:24

“And God saw our affliction” this is the forced speration of husband and wife as it is said, “God saw the children of Israel and God knew.” **“and our burden”** this refers to the drowning of the sons as it is said, “every son that is born you shall throw into the rive, and every daughter shall live.” **“and our oppression”** this refers to the severity as it is said “and I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them.”

וַיִּרְא אֶת עַנְיֵנוּ: זֹו פְרִישׁוֹת
דָּרָךְ אֶרֶץ. כְּמָה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: וַיִּרְא
אֱלֹהִים אֶת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל. וַיֵּדַע
אֱלֹהִים:
וְאֶת עֲמַלְנוֹ. אֵלוֹ הַבְּנִים. כְּמָה
שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: כָּל הַבֵּן הַיְלֹוֹד הַיֵּאָרָה
תִּשְׁלִיכֶהוּ, וְכָל הַבַּת תִּחְיֶוּ:
וְאֶת לְחַצְנוֹ. זֶה הַדְּחָק. כְּמָה
שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: וְגַם רָאִיתִי אֶת הַלְחָץ,
אֲשֶׁר מִצְרַיִם לְחָצִים אֹתָם:

Exodus 2:25

Exodus 1:22

Exodus 3:9